

Fiscal Estimate - 2015 Session

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

LRB Number 15-0773/2	Introduction Number AB-0284
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Description
 Causing or threatening bodily harm to certain child welfare and juvenile justice workers, and providing a criminal penalty

Fiscal Effect

State:

<input type="checkbox"/> No State Fiscal Effect	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indeterminate	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Existing Revenues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Costs - May be possible to absorb within agency's budget
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Existing Appropriations	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Appropriations	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Revenues	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Create New Appropriations		<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Costs	

Local:

<input type="checkbox"/> No Local Government Costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indeterminate	5. Types of Local Government Units Affected	
1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Costs	3. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> Towns	<input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> Cities
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory	<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Counties	<input type="checkbox"/> Others
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Costs	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> School Districts	<input type="checkbox"/> WTCS Districts
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory	<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory		

Fund Sources Affected	Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GPR <input type="checkbox"/> FED <input type="checkbox"/> PRO <input type="checkbox"/> PRS <input type="checkbox"/> SEG <input type="checkbox"/> SEGS 20.550(1)	

Agency/Prepared By SPD/ Anna Oehler (608) 267-0311	Authorized Signature Adam Plotkin (608) 264-8572	Date 7/17/2015
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Fiscal Estimate Narratives

SPD 7/17/2015

LRB Number	15-0773/2	Introduction Number	AB-0284	Estimate Type	Original
Description Causing or threatening bodily harm to certain child welfare and juvenile justice workers, and providing a criminal penalty					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

The State Public Defender (SPD) is statutorily authorized and required to appoint attorneys to represent indigent defendants in criminal and certain commitment proceedings. The SPD plays a critical role in ensuring that the Wisconsin justice system complies with the right to counsel provided by both the state and federal constitutions. Any legislation has the potential to increase SPD costs if it creates a new criminal offense, expands the definition of an existing criminal offense, or increases the penalties for an existing offense.

This bill extends the special circumstances battery provisions to a person who is employed by, or under contract with, a court, a county department of human or social services, a tribal child welfare agency, or the department of children and families, to provide intake, dispositional, or other services relating to child welfare or juvenile justice (child welfare or juvenile justice worker). Under the bill, if a person intentionally causes bodily harm or threatens to cause bodily harm to a child welfare or juvenile justice worker, the person is guilty of a Class H felony if the person knows or has reason to know that the victim is a child welfare or juvenile justice worker, the victim is acting in his or her official capacity, and the victim does not consent to the harm.

It is possible that given the new criminal charges, the SPD will see an increase in the number of cases in which it provides representation. We are unable, however, to quantify the number of cases that might occur due to the provisions in the bill and how many people would meet the eligibility requirements for SPD services. The SPD's average cost to provide representation with a private bar attorney in a felony case was \$551.02 in fiscal year 2014. Because of the annual caseloads for staff attorney positions specified for budgeting purposes under § 977.08(5), Stats., it would be more cost effective to add staff attorney positions if a significant number of SPD cases resulted from this provision of the bill.

Because probation or prison could be ordered upon conviction for the proposed crime, this change could indirectly lead to additional cases in which the Department of Corrections (DOC) would seek to revoke probation or extended supervision. The SPD provides representation in proceedings commenced by the Department of Corrections (DOC) to revoke supervision. Thus, the bill could indirectly increase the number of cases in which the SPD appoints attorneys in revocation proceedings. The average cost during fiscal year 2014 for SPD representation by a private bar attorney in a revocation proceeding was \$294.04.

This bill could also have a fiscal impact on counties. There are some defendants who, despite exceeding the SPD's statutory financial guidelines, are constitutionally eligible for appointment of counsel because it would be a substantial hardship for them to retain an attorney. The court is required to appoint counsel at county expense for these defendants. The counties could also incur additional costs associated with incarceration of defendants, both pending trial and after sentencing.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications